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LUNACY AND MENTAL TREATMENT ACTS

Annual Report of the
Board of Control
to the
Lord Chancellor

For the Year 1959

Presented pursuant to Act of Parliament

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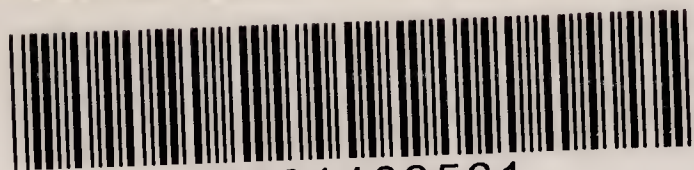
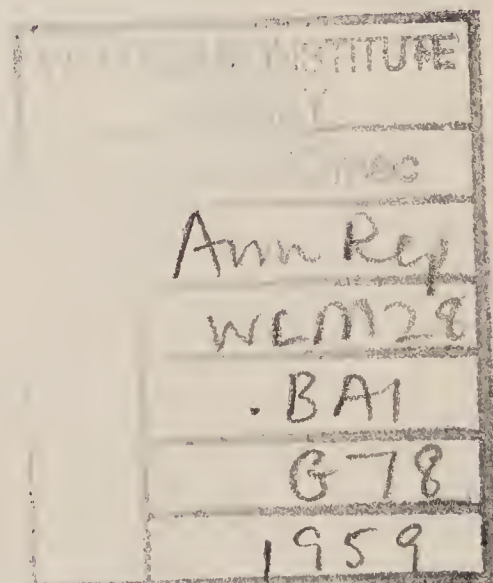
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THE FORTY-SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL FOR THE YEAR 1959

To the Right Honourable THE LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR

My Lord,

In pursuance of Section 162 of the Lunacy Act, 1890, we beg to submit the following Report:—

Introduction

This report refers briefly to the condition of mental hospitals and other institutional accommodation for the mentally ill (but not the mentally defective) in England and Wales, and to the care of such patients. Since the coming into force of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the Minister of Health has become responsible for providing and maintaining psychiatric hospitals, and the Annual Report of the Minister to Parliament now includes sections on mental health with statistics relating to all forms of mental disorder.

General

An event of first importance during the year was the enactment of the Mental Health Act, which received the Royal Assent on 29th July, 1959 and is likely to be brought fully into effect towards the end of 1960. Substantial changes will then be made in the law and administrative machinery governing the reception and detention and the care, supervision and discharge of mentally-disordered persons; in particular, the Lunacy and Mental Treatment Acts, 1890–1930 and the Mental Deficiency Acts, 1913–1938 will be completely repealed and will be replaced by a single legal code covering all forms of mental disorder. These changes are in accordance with recommendations in the Report of the Royal Commission on the Law relating to Mental Illness and Mental Deficiency*, published in 1957. The Royal Commission considered that, whenever possible, care and treatment should be provided for people suffering from mental disorder with no more legal formality or restriction of liberty than applies to people who need care and treatment for physical illness; and that compulsory powers should be used in future only when they are absolutely necessary for the patient's own welfare or for the protection of others.

The Mental Health Act also envisages the final dissolution of the Board of Control. The Board's functions as the central department responsible for the general supervision of the mental health services, as distinct from its quasi-judicial functions in relation to the liberty of the subject, had already, under the terms of the National Health Service Act, 1946, been transferred to the Minister of Health when these services became an integral part of the general health services. Of the Board's remaining functions, some will in future be carried out by the Minister of Health and the hospital and local health authorities, while others will fall to Mental Health Review Tribunals constituted under the Mental Health Act.

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The Board are proud to have been associated since 1913 with the admirable work performed by hospital and local authorities and voluntary organisations in the development and improvement of the mental health services over a difficult period covering two world wars, and are happy to take their leave knowing that the service will continue to rest substantially in these capable hands.

The first Commencement Order made under the Mental Health Act came into operation on 6th October, 1959 and repealed those provisions of the Lunacy Act, 1890 which prohibited the admission of persons of unsound mind to designated psychiatric establishments on an informal basis outside the provisions of that Act. This was an important development, and it is satisfactory to record that during the short part of the year for which the Commencement Order was effective, 16,724 patients were received for treatment on an informal basis. This represents 17·0 per cent. of the total of all direct admissions to care (98,243) during the year. In addition, a further 69,854 (71·1 per cent.) were admitted as voluntary patients during the year; thus in 88 per cent. of all the direct admissions for treatment during 1959, compulsory powers were not used. There is every hope that this encouraging and long-established trend will continue.

During the period after the coming into force of the Commencement Order, hospitals began a review of the position of those patients who were already in hospital under the provisions of the Lunacy and Mental Treatment Acts. As a result, a substantial number were discharged from order and remained in hospital informally. The review was not finished by the end of the year, but on 31st December the total number of informal patients in designated accommodation was 34,506.

Accommodation

At 31st December, 1959 there were 100,575 patients under care under the provisions of the Lunacy and Mental Treatment Acts, 1890–1930, as well as 34,506 under treatment in designated accommodation on an informal basis outside the provisions of those Acts. In addition, there were 210 Broadmoor patients in mental hospitals and 885 in Broadmoor Institution. The total number of patients under treatment in statutory accommodation was thus 136,176, a reduction of 5,452 compared with 31st December, 1958. There has thus been a continuation of the very satisfactory tendency, mentioned in last year's Annual Report, for there to be a decline in the total number of patients in hospital at any one time. This is no doubt largely due to the greatly increasing success of modern methods of treatment in preventing disabling chronic mental illness, and to the rehabilitation and discharge of the long-stay patient.

The designated mental hospitals, excluding the former public assistance institutions, had, at 31st December, 1959, accommodation for 120,538 beds calculated on the space-standards prescribed by the Ministry of Health. This figure is 492 less than that for 31st December, 1958, the reduction being largely due to the de-designation of beds for the treatment of patients outside the provisions of the Acts. Of the 120,538 bed-spaces provided by these hospitals, 2,962 were not available for use by patients, 343 were closed owing to shortage of staff, 615 were being used for other services and 2,004 were in wards awaiting renovation and repairs. Thus there was space on these standards for 607 fewer beds than at the end of 1958; but overcrowding, which amounted to 8,918 beds, had been reduced by 4,014 beds.

Admissions

There were 95,350 admissions to designated mental hospitals in 1959 compared with 91,558 in 1958 and 55,856 in 1950. Admissions to all institutions and to private single care numbered 98,243 in 1959, an increase of 2,275 over the previous year.

Admissions under certificate continued to decrease. In 1958, 77,850 (85·0 per cent.) of the admissions to designated mental hospitals were voluntary and 12,355 (13·5 per cent.) were under certificate. Although during 1959 voluntary admissions decreased by 10,317 to 67,533 (70·8 per cent.), this reduction in numbers was more than offset by the admission (during the last three months of the year) of 16,410 patients (17·2 per cent.) on an informal basis outside the provisions of the Acts. The admissions under certificate fell to 10,422 (10·9 per cent.). As regards admissions to all types of care (i.e. including admissions to registered hospitals, licensed houses, nursing homes and to single care), the number of voluntary admissions was 69,854 (71·1 per cent.). These, coupled with admissions on an informal basis numbering 16,724 (17·0 per cent.), accounted for 88 per cent. of the total of 98,243 admissions, while admissions under certificate fell by 2,196 to 10,672 (10·9 per cent.).

Information is not available to show exactly how many of those patients admitted during 1959 had previously received in-patient treatment under the Lunacy and Mental Treatment Acts, but it is estimated to be 48 per cent.

Movement and Distribution of Patients

Details of the movement of patients during the year and their distribution at the end of the year are given in the Appendix.

Nurses

The information available about nurses relates only to those hospitals classified as mental hospitals on the criteria set out in the note to the table below. These hospitals contribute approximately 95 per cent. of all beds for mentally-ill patients in National Health Service hospitals.

Nursing Staff in Mental-Illness Hospitals

Grade	1958 30th September		1959 30th September	
	Whole-time	Part-time	Whole-time	Part-time
Total:				
All grades	22,093	7,300	24,652	6,747
Male	11,470	260	12,268	338
Female	10,623	7,040	12,384	6,409
Trained nurses:				
Total	10,893	1,593	11,415	1,446
Male	7,117	198	7,193	259
Female	3,776	1,395	4,222	1,187
Student nurses:				
Total	5,267	—	6,178	—
Male	2,459	—	3,005	—
Female	2,808	—	3,173	—
Others:				
Total	5,933	5,707	7,059	5,301
Male	1,894	62	2,070	79
Female	4,039	5,645	4,989	5,222

Note: These figures relate to hospitals:—

- (a) having at least 90 per cent. of their beds allocated for mental patients; or
- (b) having at least 90 per cent. of their beds allocated for mental and mental-deficiency patients, the majority being for mental patients.

Registered Hospitals, Licensed Houses and Nursing Homes

The four hospitals⁽¹⁾ registered for the reception of persons suffering from mental illness provided at the end of the year a total of about 1,200 beds. They were visited and found to be in their usual good condition.

Of the twenty licensed houses⁽²⁾ remaining in operation at the end of the year, eight were licensed by the Minister of Health and twelve by provincial justices. They were licensed for the accommodation of a maximum of 970 patients. Visits to them were made as required by statute and in general conditions in them were satisfactory.

At 31st December, 1959 there were still eleven nursing homes approved by the Minister of Health for the reception of voluntary or temporary patients under the Mental Treatment Act, 1930.

Single Patients

At 31st December, 1959, there were 37 patients in private single care⁽³⁾, a reduction of three during the year. Thirty-six were visited and conditions found to be satisfactory. A visit is pending in the outstanding case.

Broadmoor Institution

The year under review was a satisfactory one generally. As regards treatment, the carefully-prepared programme aimed at upgrading the chronic psychotic population of the hospital, using in the main recently-developed forms of drug therapy, continued to achieve encouraging results.

The Institution was visited regularly during the year.

P. Wing, Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley

The usual visit was paid to this Service Hospital and a satisfactory report was received.

The Board of Control

Dr. S. M. Allan, formerly Medical Superintendent of Exminster Hospital, Devon, joined the Board in January, 1959, on his appointment as a Commissioner.

It is with pleasure that we report that the Order of the British Empire was conferred upon Miss I. M. C. Duncan, one of the Board's Legal Commissioners, in the Birthday Honours List, 1959.

By Order of the Board,

I. F. ARMER, *Chairman.*

P. BENNER, *Secretary.*

Ministry of Health Building,
Savile Row,
London, W.1.

June, 1960.

(1) Cheadle Royal, near Manchester; St. Andrew's, Northampton; The Retreat, York; and Barnwood House, Gloucester. These hospitals are not vested in the Minister of Health, but are managed on a voluntary basis.

(2) These are privately-owned houses or homes in which patients are received for payment.

(3) A patient in single care resides with and under the legal control of a private individual (Cmd. 8594, published June, 1952).

APPENDIX

DISTRIBUTION OF PATIENTS

The distribution of all patients at the end of the year 1959 may be seen by reference to Tables I and II, and the changes by class and status of patients are set out in Table III. 98·5 per cent. of them were resident in hospitals vested in the Minister of Health.

MOVEMENT OF PATIENTS

Admissions, Discharges, Transfers and Deaths in 1959

The following statement includes patients of each status (voluntary, temporary and certified) and patients admitted informally to accommodation designated, registered, licensed or approved under the Acts.

	Total
Resident at 1st January, 1959	141,628
Direct admissions (including transfers from non-statutory accommodation)	98,243
Transfers from other care	384 ⁽¹⁾
	240,255
Discharges from care	86,519
Discharges to non-statutory accommodation ...	3,409
Transfers to other care	375 ⁽¹⁾
Deaths	13,776
Remained at 31st December, 1959	136,176
	240,255

⁽¹⁾ The figure of "Transfers from other care" is slightly greater than "Transferred to other care", presumably because some hospitals have classified such transfers as discharges.

TABLE I

PATIENTS UNDER CARE AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1959 AND 31ST DECEMBER, 1958
ANALYSIS BY TYPE OF CARE AND CLASS OF PATIENT

		31st December, 1959				31st Dec., 1958
		Private	Health Service	Broad-moor Patients	Total	Total
Total	...	2,898	132,183	1,095	136,176†	141,628
	Males	816	56,719	898	58,433	60,565
	Females	2,082	75,464	197	77,743	81,063
In hospitals vested in the Minister of Health:—						
(i) Mental hospitals	...	983	131,999	210	133,192	138,122
	Total*	310	56,654	186	57,150	59,075
	Males	673	75,345	24	76,042	79,047
	Females					
(ii) Teaching hospitals	...	—	24	—	24	392
	Total	—	14	—	14	163
	Males	—	10	—	10	229
	Females					
(iii) Broadmoor Institution		—	—	885	885	913
	Total	—	—	712	712	729
	Males	—	—	173	173	184
	Females					
In premises not vested in the Minister of Health but deemed to be mental hospitals.		—	2	—	2	31
	Total	—	1	—	1	13
	Males	—	1	—	1	18
	Females					
In Registered hospitals	...	1,017	122	—	1,139	1,212
	Total	350	50	—	400	428
	Males	667	72	—	739	784
	Females					
In Licensed houses:—						
Metropolitan	...	185	—	—	185	206
	Total	48	—	—	48	50
	Males	137	—	—	137	156
	Females					
Provincial	...	527	36	—	563	580
	Total	90	—	—	90	93
	Males	437	36	—	473	487
	Females					
In nursing homes approved under the Mental Treatment Act.		149	—	—	149	132
	Total	11	—	—	11	6
	Males	138	—	—	138	126
	Females					
In private single care	...	37	—	—	37	40
	Total	7	—	—	7	8
	Males	30	—	—	30	32
	Females					

* The numbers in former Public Assistance Institutions included in the totals were 7,017 at 31st December, 1958 and 6,684 at 31st December, 1959.

† Included in this total are 34,506 patients admitted informally—see Table II for details.

TABLE II
ANALYSIS BY TYPE OF CARE AND STATUS OF PATIENT

		31st December, 1959					31st Dec., 1958
		In-formal	Volun-tary	Tem-porary	Certi-fied	Total	Total
Total	Total	34,506	48,462	147	53,061	136,176	141,628
	Males	14,736	20,813	44	22,840	58,433	60,565
	Females	19,770	27,649	103	30,221	77,743	81,063
In hospitals vested in the Minister of Health:—							
(i) Mental hospitals.		Total	34,173	47,586	146	51,287	133,192
	Males	14,634	20,616	44	21,856	57,150	59,075
	Females	19,539	26,970	102	29,431	76,042	79,047
(ii) Teaching hospitals.		Total	—	24	—	24	392
	Males	—	14	—	—	14	163
	Females	—	10	—	—	10	229
(iii) Broadmoor Institution.		Total	—	—	885	885	913
	Males	—	—	—	712	712	729
	Females	—	—	—	173	173	184
In premises not vested in the Minister of Health but deemed to be mental hospitals.		Total	—	—	2	2	31
	Males	—	—	—	1	1	13
	Females	—	—	—	1	1	18
In Registered hospitals		Total	267	348	1	523	1,139
	Males	85	108	—	207	400	428
	Females	182	240	1	316	739	784
In Licensed houses:—							
Metropolitan ...		Total	3	128	—	54	185
	Males	—	31	—	17	48	50
	Females	3	97	—	37	137	156
Provincial ...		Total	17	268	—	278	580
	Males	6	41	—	43	90	93
	Females	11	227	—	235	473	487
In nursing homes approved under the Mental Treatment Act		Total	46	103	—	149	132
	Males	11	—	—	—	11	6
	Females	35	103	—	—	138	126
In private single care ...		Total	—	5	32	37	40
	Males	—	3	—	4	7	8
	Females	—	2	—	28	30	32
Of total:—							
Private patients ...		Total	482	1,233	1	1,182	2,898
	Males	140	324	—	352	816	861
	Females	342	909	1	830	2,082	2,241
Health Service patients.		Total	34,024	47,229	146	50,784	132,183
	Males	14,596	20,489	44	21,590	56,719	58,798
	Females	19,428	26,740	102	29,194	75,464	78,621
Broadmoor patients.		Total	—	—	1,095	1,095	1,107
	Males	—	—	—	898	898	906
	Females	—	—	—	197	197	201

TABLE III

ANALYSIS OF CHANGES BY CLASS AND STATUS OF PATIENT

	Increase (+) or decrease (—) during 1959			Average annual increase (+) or decrease (—) in five years 1955–59 inclusive		
	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Total	– 5,452	– 2,132	– 3,320	– 3,193	– 1,272	– 1,921
Class:—						
Private... ..	– 204	– 45	– 159	– 298	– 126	– 172
Health Service ...	– 5,236	– 2,079	– 3,157	– 2,899	– 1,155	– 1,744
Broadmoor Patients ...	– 12	– 8	– 4	+ 4	+ 9	– 5
Status:—						
Informal	+34,506	+14,736	+19,770	} +9,121	+ 3,840	+ 5,281
Voluntary	–14,248	– 6,098	– 8,150			
Temporary	– 204	– 55	– 149	– 39	– 11	– 28
Certified	–25,506	–10,715	–14,791	–12,275	– 5,101	– 7,174

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